

Neighborhood Activity Center

Presented by Hula



Presenters

JOHN CAULO

- Land development and planning consultant working with Russ Scully on the transformation of the Blodgett Pizza oven factory
- Academic background in City Planning, and former BTV planner and zoning administrator

RUSS SCULLY

- Along with Roxanne Scully, Russ is the owner/developer of Hula, a 15-acre business accelerator space located along Lakeside Avenue.
- They also are the owners of a 6+ acre surface parking lot located at 125 Lakeside Ave, across the street from the Innovation Center.



Proposal:

Amend the zoning ordinance to insert a mixed-use, “**Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)**” zone district into the central portion of the existing E-LM zone.



Key Planning Goals

- **Affordable, multi-family housing** to support a growing workforce
- **Walkable** neighborhoods
- **Convenient access** to neighborhood goods and services

Background

This proposal revisits an earlier public policy discussion from **2015**.

Draft version of the planBTV-*South End* master plan contemplated housing in the E-LM zone.

Concept was introduced and quickly removed from consideration. Why? — In initial form, housing was considered for the entire E-LM district which could result in some negative outcomes over time:

1. Conversion of cheap artist studio space to residential use
2. Loss of manufacturing space
3. Loss of an intangible urban “fabric” that has provided the Pine Street corridor with so much of its character

planBTV SOUTH END



planBTV SOUTH END

Adopted in March 2019, the housing component of *planBTV South End* provides conflicting visions for new housing in the area. Some direct quotes reveal the ambivalence:

- “The South End is a desirable place to live”
- “Residentially zoned areas of the South End are largely built out, and the Enterprise District zoning prohibits residential uses”
- “The eclectic character and walkability of the neighborhood are attracting the city’s young professionals and families”
- “The lack of available housing is negatively impacting the City’s ability to attract young professional and companies seeking to hire young professionals”
- “It is increasingly difficult to make the case that all housing should be excluded from the Enterprise Zone, given:
 - Regional and City-wide housing shortage
 - Economic and environmental importance of locating housing close to workplaces
 - Fundamental shift of the relationship of home and work in the new American city”



planBTV SOUTH END

When published in March 2019, *planBTV South End* did not recommend zoning changes to permit housing in the E-LM zone. However, it acknowledged the critical need for housing by asking the question:

“Are there locations or situations in which housing might be appropriate in some parts of the Enterprise Zone?”



Neighborhood Activity Center-innovation (NAC-I) Zone District

To frame this discussion, we are using the 5 Ws to provide the Commission with a high level summary presentation:

1. What? 2. Who? 3. Where? 4. When? 5. Why?



What is being proposed?

A new zoning designation within the existing E-LM district that will promote mixed use, walkable neighborhoods in the central portion of the Pine Street corridor.



What is being proposed?

We recommend the City create a new “Neighborhood Activity Center” (NAC) designation for the area.

- NAC is an existing “tool” in the City’s zoning toolbox
- Successfully applied throughout the City, including **Cambrian Rise**, Along **Riverside Ave**, At the **intersection of Flynn & Pine**, **McClure Center** (Pine Street, south of Home)

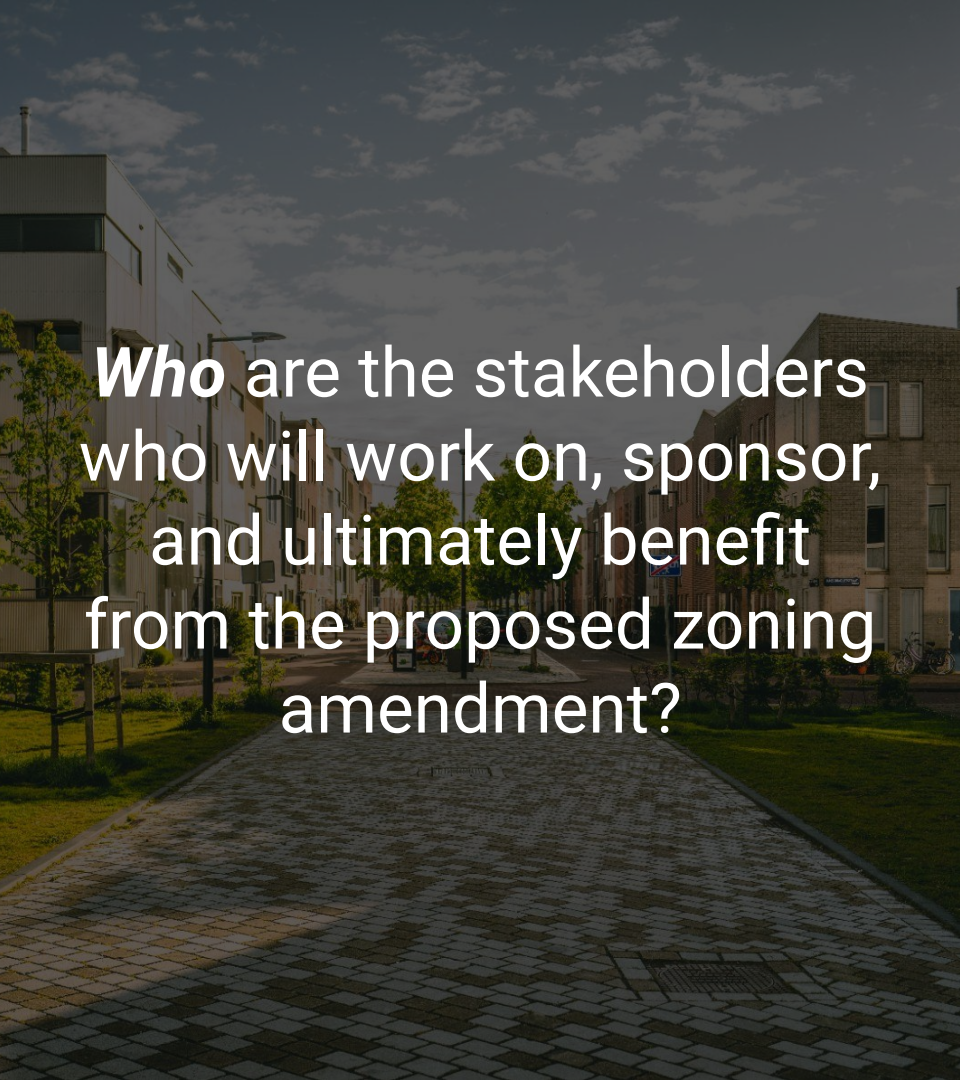
Neighborhood Activity Center Defined:

Neighborhood Mixed Use districts promote development that combines nonresidential and residential uses on a single site(s).

- These zones allow an **increased intensity of development** than would typically be found in the surrounding residential areas, and **provide neighborhood oriented goods and services** and **employment opportunities** within walking and biking distance.
- **Supports transit use** by providing a buffer between busy streets and residential neighborhoods, and provide **new commercial and residential opportunities** in the City.
- Nonresidential uses...
 - Should primarily be oriented to **serving the needs of the surrounding residential neighborhoods** and other neighborhood commercial uses.
 - Should be **located on ground floor** with housing and other non-residential uses on upper
- Building design should be **Pedestrian-friendly** with buildings oriented to the sidewalk, especially at corners
 - Parking is intended to be hidden from the street

The proposed mixed-use NAC-I zone would:

- Accommodate a diverse range of complimentary studio, office, institutional and neighborhood-oriented retail and service uses.
- Provide a 21st century update of the “factory town” adjacency between the *Lakeside* neighborhood and the Innovation Center.



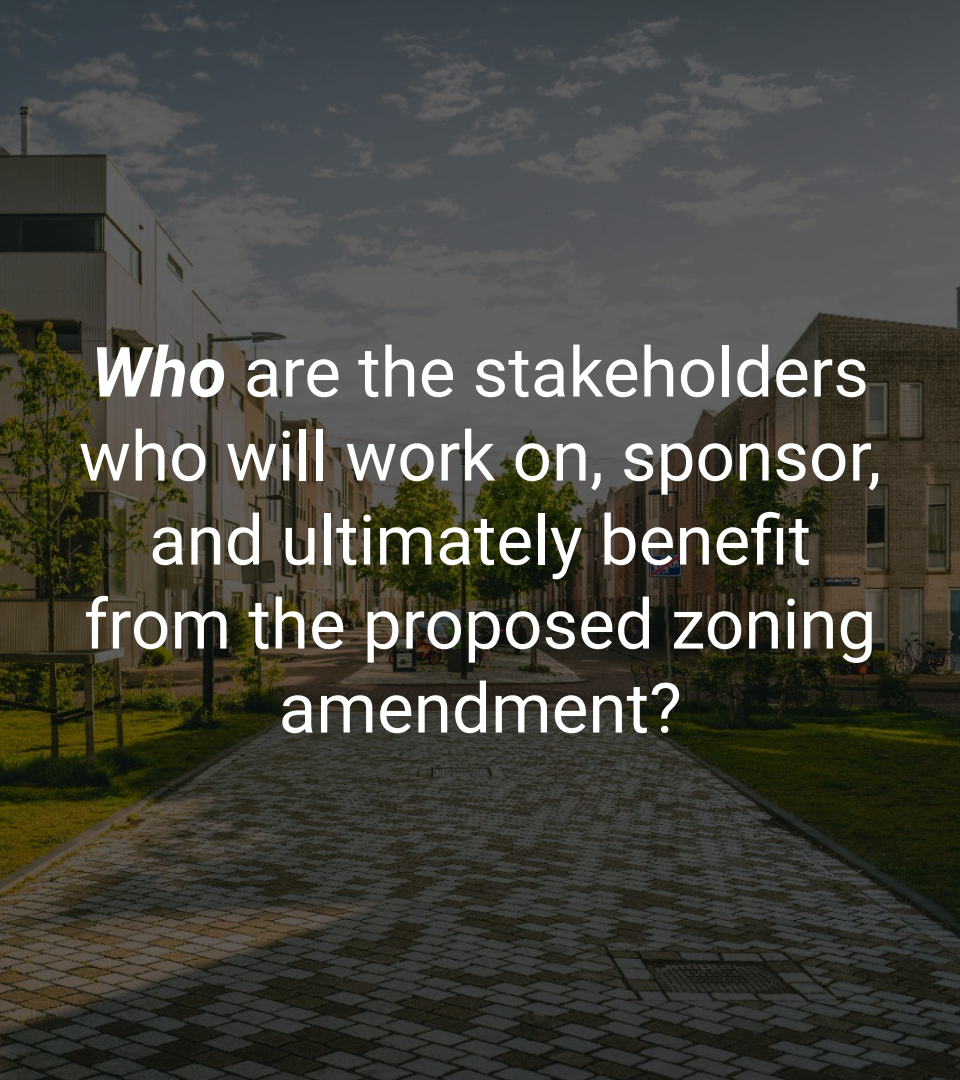
Who are the stakeholders who will work on, sponsor, and ultimately benefit from the proposed zoning amendment?

Over the past six months, we have reached out to many South End stakeholders to discuss various topics of concern, including the pandemic, emerging neighborhood trends and needs.

Without exception, the stakeholders we spoke with acknowledge the need for affordable, workforce housing and support the goal of creating urban walkable neighborhoods as envisioned by this proposed zoning amendment.

The groups include:

- **Residential neighbors** (from Lakeside neighborhood; other individuals from the south end)
- **Childcare advocates** (Let's Grow Kids; Pine Forest Children's Center)
- **Affordable housing developers** (Champlain Housing Trust; Evernorth)
- **Artists and Makers** (individual members from SEABA and Generator)
- **Property and Business Owners; South End Employers** (Beta Technologies / Burton / Champlain Chocolates / Champlain College / Conant Metal & Light / Davis Co. / Dealer / Marvell Semiconductors / Select Design / and more)



Who are the stakeholders
who will work on, sponsor,
and ultimately benefit
from the proposed zoning
amendment?



Russ Scully
Hula
50 Lakeside Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

Dear Mr. Scully,

It is my pleasure to submit this letter in support of your efforts to rezone a portion of the South End from *Enterprise – Light Manufacturing* to *Neighborhood Activity Center – Innovation*.

Hula's vision for expansion in Burlington's South End neighborhood – an expansion project with consideration for an onsite high-quality child care center to meet the needs of local children, families, and employers – is incredibly exciting!

At Let's Grow Kids, a 501c3 systems-change organization leading Vermont's Campaign for Child Care, we are advocating for early childhood education policy change and public investment while simultaneously implementing solutions that address the biggest challenges facing early childhood educators and the families that rely on their success.

Community projects like this one that include high-quality child care programs in the initial planning stages reflect the kind of community-led solutions that advance Let's Grow Kids' mission to ensure affordable access to high-quality child care for every Vermont child who needs it by 2025.

Child care is essential to Vermonters. I am pleased to support this rezoning effort and by extension the expansion of a high-quality child care program in Burlington's South End community.

I look forward to following this project's success!

Sincerely,

Aly Richards, Chief Executive Officer
Let's Grow Kids

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from the proposed zoning
amendment?



June 9, 2021

Russ Scully, Owner/Developer
Hula
50 Lakeside Ave
Burlington, Vermont 05401

Russ:

It was a pleasure meeting you and your team at Hula. It is a very impressive space and undertaking, and I believe is already transformative in its design, approach and opportunity.

As we discussed, and without a doubt, the need for additional housing in Burlington is well documented as is the specific demand for both affordable housing and for people who are in the workforce. And there is no doubt the opportunity to create housing in Burlington's South End.

I particularly like the zoning amendment that would permit housing in portions of the E-LM zone as outlined in the zoning amendment your team has proposed. It will not only help to meet the demand, but also create communities that are in scale and walkable for many of the people who work in the South End.

Please consider this a letter of support, as well as a letter expressing CHT's interest in continuing discussion on how we, CHT and its partners, could participate in the creation of affordable housing at the site.

Sincerely,

Michael Monte

Michael Monte
CEO, Champlain Housing Trust

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FRANKLIN/GRAND ISLE 11 Lake Street, St. Albans, Vermont 05478 | P: 802.527.2364 | F: 802.527.2372

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EMPLOYER AND PROVIDER



Who are the stakeholders who will work on, sponsor, and ultimately benefit from the proposed zoning amendment?



June 1, 2021

Dear Russ,

I have been meaning to thank you for recently hosting a group of artists and makers for a Hula tour and discussion on future possibilities for our South End community. I am impressed by the quality and care that has gone into the renovation of the buildings and grounds, and I am confident Hula will generate the range of community and economic development benefiting the creative economy of Burlington as a whole.

With regards to future development possibilities along the Pine Street corridor, I am intrigued with your vision to support the job creation at Hula by creating walkable urban neighborhoods on underdeveloped and vacant land in the vicinity. In addition to new workforce housing for young professionals, I support your interest in constructing a variety of housing types including artist live/work studios, and affordable housing meeting inclusionary requirements, all over a range of ground-floor services. While I understand this mixed-use concept will require a zoning amendment to create a 'Neighborhood' district for the new housing, I think the proposed delineation of the district has been thoughtfully drawn to avoid conflicts with existing artist/maker space. Plus, the pedestrian-friendly approach is both forward looking and timely. This community needs more housing in locations that do not require an automobile.

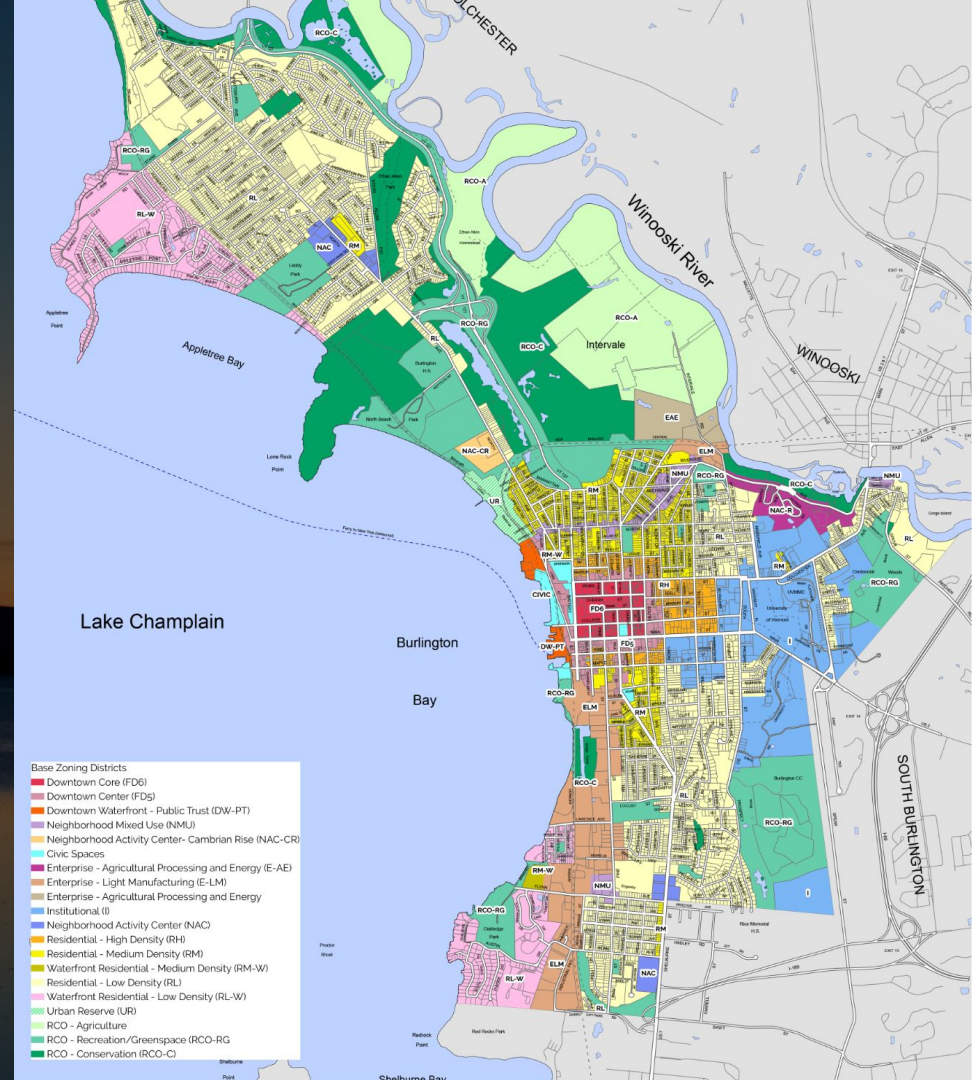
Generator, a makerspace providing artist & maker studios, hands-on educational opportunities, and business incubation services including access to prototyping and industry-level tools thrives on the intersection of art, science and technology. Generator and Hula share similar goals and values. We believe that a thriving community, one that your neighborhood development will provide is pivotal to this Burlington district and Vermont-at-large. Not only do we support this project, we are thankful to be a neighbor. I hope that Generator and Hula can work together in the future on projects that advance our collaborative goals and values for Vermont's economic and workforce development.

I wish you continued good luck with Hula, and hope your efforts on adjacent parcels goes smooth. Let us know how Generator can help. Please feel free to text, call or email anytime.

Sincerely,

Meg Hammond
Executive Director
802-595-2233 | director@generatorvt.com

Where is the proposed new zone district located?



The proposed NAC-I zone is to be located on the west side of Pine Street in the central portion of the E-LM zone, generally extending from Sears Lane on the south to Howard Street extended on the north.





Total Land Area
53.5 acres

Total Properties
12

Percent Vacant
41%



- The properties contained within the proposed re-zoning area include several vacant and underutilized parcels
- The proposed zone district also includes several municipal, institutional and commercial holdings.
- This proposed zone district **does not include**:
 - properties on the east side of Pine Street, thereby protecting those existing artist studio spaces (e.g., Soda Plant; Howard Space) within the E-LM zone from future conversion to residential use.
 - Existing commercial properties with frontage on the west side of Pine Street

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of a desk. On the left, a portion of a calendar is visible, showing dates like 19, 20, 21, 26, and 27. A wooden pen or pencil lies horizontally across the top of the calendar. The overall lighting is soft and focused on the desk area.

When do we want this amendment adopted?

- We appreciate the Planning Commission works in the interest of the overall community, and that it prioritizes its efforts accordingly.
- We also understand the statutory requirements involved in any zoning amendment include the review and approval by both the Commission and City Council.
- With this presentation, we are initiating the amendment process. And given the urgency of the topic, we request the amendment be given the utmost attention.
- We commit to be an active participant throughout the process, collaborating with the Planning staff and Commission, and City Council as required.



Why are we doing this?

With this zoning amendment in place, several critical challenges confronting our community can be overcome, including:

Relieve an unremitting housing shortage and improve supply/demand dynamics for both rental and for-sale housing

- Like many communities across the nation, the housing shortage in Burlington is at a crisis stage, particularly for those young residents wishing to enter the housing market
- Encourage the production of modern, energy-efficient housing stock meeting the needs of a growing workforce (and affordable/inclusionary) population will contribute to a healthier and more economically just community.
- Expand the definition of acceptable housing types to be permitted under the Ordinance



Why are we doing this?

When this zoning amendment is adopted, several important challenges facing our community can be advanced, including:

Address the negative impacts of climate change in a meaningful way

- Encourage the production of energy-efficient housing in a mixed-use, walkable neighborhood environment
- The proposed district is directly adjacent to the City Bikeway, rail lines and proposed Champlain Parkway,
 - Well positioned for a variety of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities over the short and long term, including commuter rail and revival of a multi-modal transit center proposed by BTV in 2006.



Why are we doing this?

When this zoning amendment is adopted, several important challenges facing our community can be advanced, including:

Enhance the local creative economy the South End is known for:

- Repurposing vacant and underutilized parcels will enhance the arts and culture vibrancy along the Pine Street corridor by providing:
 - Additional residential customer base
 - Potential for additional ground-floor studio and maker space.



Why are we doing this?

When this zoning amendment is adopted, several important challenges facing our community can be advanced, including:

Support the existing employment base and emerging job growth in the E-LM zone:

- Create walkable neighborhoods with convenient access to jobs and services; in other words, the 21st Century version of a factory town.
- Employers point to the lack of affordable housing as the primary impediment to spurring additional growth in the local workforce—lack of affordable child care is a close second.



Thank You!

We welcome your questions and comments